



## VANCOUVER CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL SALUTES PARK BOARD PLAN TO SELECT OFFICIAL TREE FOR CITY OF VANCOUVER

**VANCOUVER, BC (May 18, 2016)** – After 10 years of celebrating Vancouver’s 41,000 ornamental cherry trees and playing a key role in having thousands of new cherry trees added to public and park spaces, as well as on private property, the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival (VCBF) today congratulated the Vancouver Park Board for its plan to select an official tree for the City of Vancouver.

Approved by the Park Board at its meeting on Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, the nomination and selection process would include input from students in Vancouver schools, the public, and a panel with expertise in forest diversity. Once endorsed and adopted by the City of Vancouver, the official tree would be announced during Tree Week 2017.

“We commend the Park Board for their plan to select an official tree for Vancouver,” said Linda Poole, founder and executive director of the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival. “As a festival dedicated to celebrating our wonderful flowering cherry trees each spring, we recognize the hard work everyone at the Park Board does year-round to care for, maintain and celebrate the 440,000 trees that grace our streets and parks.

“Vancouver is blessed to have so many varieties of trees that enrich our lives every day. We think the winning tree should be one that uplifts our spirits and is accessible throughout the city. It should also be a tree that is as beautiful and inspiring and diverse as the people and natural surroundings that make Vancouver such a wonderful place to live. Over the next 11 months, we look forward to sharing why we think the much-loved cherry tree is the perfect choice to be the official tree of Vancouver.”

Below are some of the ways cherry trees enrich the lives of Vancouverites every day:

1. **Cherry trees are in every Vancouver neighbourhood**, spreading joy and beauty to all who cast their gaze upon them.
2. **Cherry trees transform our streets each spring** in spectacular explosions of pink and white blossoms.
3. **Cherry trees promote Vancouver**, with media organizations worldwide featuring Vancouver streets in bloom.
4. **Cherry trees boost Vancouver tourism**, with our global reputation for spectacular cherry streets and cherry groves attracting visitors from around the world.
5. **Cherry trees promote exercise**, with thousands of people walking and cycling along city-wide cherry tree routes.

6. **Cherry trees reflect Vancouver's diversity**, with 54 different cultivars (varieties) blooming at different times in different colours.
7. **Cherry trees inspire poetry**, with thousands of people from dozens of countries submitting their homage to the cherry tree via the Leith Wheeler Investment Counsel Haiku Invitational poetry contest each year.
8. **Cherry trees celebrate international friendship**, with our first trees arriving as gifts from the Japanese cities of Kobe and Yokohama.
9. **Cherry trees inspire the visual and performing arts**, with plein-air painters and thousands of photographers capturing the beauty of the blossoms on canvas and on camera.
10. **Cherry trees make us happy** by marking the end of winter and the arrival of spring.
11. **Cherry trees promote friendship**, by bringing Vancouverites of all ages and backgrounds together for physical and cultural activities that celebrate our city, our shared love of the great outdoors, and the joy that comes from the simple things such as the delicate beauty of a single cherry blossom.

To voice their support for the cherry tree, Vancouverites are urged to visit the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival at [VCBF.CA](http://VCBF.CA) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/VancouverCherryBlossomFestival](http://www.facebook.com/VancouverCherryBlossomFestival).

### **About the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival**

Vancouver's signature springtime event, the *Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival* is a month-long celebration of the cherry tree (sakura) through unique cultural programming including the performing and visual arts, literary, film screenings, design installations, exhibitions, culinary and creative cultural arts. The Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival is a charitable, not-for-profit society whose mandate is to sustain and renew Vancouver's cherry tree heritage while educating and engaging community in a cultural celebration of the fragile beauty of the cherry blossom.

#### **Contact:**

Linda Poole  
Founder and Executive Director  
Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival  
604-767-9044

*"there is no stranger under the cherry tree..."*

Visit us @ [vcbf.ca](http://vcbf.ca)

Like us @ [www.facebook.com/VancouverCherryBlossomFestival](http://www.facebook.com/VancouverCherryBlossomFestival)

Tweet us @ <http://twitter.com/#!/OfficialVCBF>